IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claim 5 and 11 without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and amend the claims as shown below. The claims, as pending in the subject application, now read as follows:

1. (Currently amended) An image forming ~~management~~ apparatus ~~for managing license information indicating an amount of allowed usage of a program executable on an image forming apparatus or a function of the image forming apparatus~~, comprising:

image forming means for executing an image forming process;

management means for managing (a) license information that has already been installed in the image forming apparatus, the license information indicating an amount of allowed usage of a program executable on the image forming apparatus or a function of the image forming apparatus, and (b) license identification information corresponding to the license information, wherein the management means manages the license information by using a counter;

acquisition means for acquiring, via a network, license identification information identifying license information, device identification information and license information indicating an amount of a change in a right of usage of the program;

~~management means for managing license identification information corresponding to license information that has already been installed;~~

determination means for determining whether the acquired license identification information corresponding to the acquired license information is included in

the license identification information managed by the management means so as to avoid a duplicate installation of the license information; ~~and~~

recognition means for recognizing whether the acquired device identification information corresponds to device identification information of the image forming apparatus;

installation means for, if the determination means determines that the acquired license identification information corresponding to the acquired license information is not included in the license identification information managed by the management means, and if the recognition means recognizes that the acquired device identification information corresponds to the device identification information of the image forming apparatus, installing the acquired license information to ~~add~~ increase the amount of allowed usage of the program ~~in accordance with the license information acquired by the acquisition means~~ by operating the counter, wherein the installation means does not install the acquired license information if the determination means determines that the acquired license identification information corresponding to the acquired license information is included in the license identification information managed by the management means or if the recognition means recognizes that the acquired device identification information does not correspond to the device identification information of the image forming apparatus.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~A management~~ The image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein

the management ~~apparatus~~ means further manages expiration-date-of-installation information indicating a period during which the license information acquired by the acquisition means is valid; and

the ~~management~~ image forming apparatus further comprises authentication means for authenticating the expiration date of installation of the license information.

3. (Currently Amended) ~~A management~~ The image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the management means further manages an encryption key of an already-installed program code together with program identification information identifying the program.

4. (Currently Amended) ~~A management~~ The image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein

the acquired license information is encrypted using an encryption key uniquely assigned to the image forming apparatus; and

the ~~management~~ image forming apparatus further comprises decryption means for decrypting the encrypted license information.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) ~~A management~~ The image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein

the management means manages the license information in the form of certification information; and

the license information in the form of certification information certifies the right of a particular amount of usage of [[a]] the program installed on the image forming apparatus or [[a]] the function of the image forming apparatus.

7. (Currently amended) A license information management method implemented by an image forming apparatus, ~~for managing license information indicating an amount of allowed usage of a program executable on an image forming apparatus or a function of the image forming apparatus~~, comprising the steps of:

an image forming step of executing an image forming process;

a management step of managing, by a management unit, (a) license information that has already been installed in the image forming apparatus, the license information indicating an amount of allowed usage of a program executable on the image forming apparatus or a function of the image forming apparatus and (b) license identification information corresponding to the license information, wherein the management step manages the license information by a using a counter;

an acquisition step of acquiring, via a network, license identification information identifying license information, device identification information and license information indicating an amount of a change in a right of usage of the program;

~~managing by a management unit license identification information corresponding to license information that has already been installed;~~

a determination step of determining whether the acquired license identification information corresponding to the acquired license information is included in the license identification information managed by the management unit so as to avoid a duplicate installation of the license information; ~~and~~

a recognition step of recognizing whether the acquired device identification information corresponds to device identification information of the image forming apparatus; and

an installation step of, if it is determined in the ~~determining~~ determination step that the acquired license identification information corresponding to the acquired license information is not included in the license identification information managed by the management unit and if the recognition step recognizes that the acquired device identification information corresponds to the device identification information of the image forming apparatus, installing the acquired license information to ~~add~~ increase the amount of allowed usage of the program ~~in accordance with the license information acquired in the acquiring step~~ by operating the counter, and if the ~~determining~~ determination step determines that the acquired license identification information corresponding to the acquired license information is included in the license identification information managed by the management unit, or if the recognition step recognizes that the acquired device identification information does not correspond to the device identification information of the image forming apparatus, not installing the acquired license information.

8. (Currently Amended) ~~A management~~ The method according to claim 7, wherein the management step further includes the step of managing

expiration-date-of-installation information indicating a period during which the license information acquired in the acquisition step is valid; and

the method further comprises the step of authenticating the expiration date of installation of the license information.

9. (Currently Amended) ~~A management~~ The method according to claim 7, wherein the management step further includes the step of managing an encryption key of an already-installed program code together with program identification information identifying the program.

10. (Currently Amended) ~~A management~~ The method according to claim 7, wherein

the acquired license information is encrypted using an encryption key uniquely assigned to the image forming apparatus; and

the method further comprises ~~the~~ a step of decrypting the encrypted license information.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently amended) ~~A management~~ The method according to claim 7, wherein the management step manages the license information in the form of certification information, and the license information certifies the right of a particular amount of usage

of [[a]] the program installed on the image forming apparatus or [[a]] the function of the image forming apparatus peripheral device.

13. (Currently amended) A computer-readable storage medium including a control program stored thereon for being executed by a processor of an image forming apparatus to manage license information ~~indicating an amount of allowed usage of a program executable on an image forming apparatus or a function of the image forming apparatus~~, the control program comprising the steps of:

an image forming step of executing an image forming process;

a management step of managing, by a management unit, (a) license information that has already been installed in the image forming apparatus, the license information indicating an amount of allowed usage of a program executable on the image forming apparatus or a function of the image forming apparatus and (b) license identification information corresponding to the license information, wherein the management step manages the license information by a using a counter;

an acquisition step of acquiring, via a network, license identification information identifying license information, device identification information and license information indicating an amount of a change in a right of usage of the program;

~~managing by a management unit license identification information corresponding to license information that has already been installed;~~

a determination step of determining whether the acquired license identification information corresponding to the acquired license information is included in

the license identification information managed by the management unit so as to avoid a duplicate installation of the license information; ~~and~~

a recognition step of recognizing whether the acquired device identification information corresponds to device identification information of the image forming apparatus; and

an installation step of, if it is determined in the ~~determining~~ determination step that the acquired license identification information corresponding to the acquired license information is not included in the license identification information managed by the management unit and if the recognition step recognizes that the acquired device identification information corresponds to the device identification information of the image forming apparatus, installing the license information to ~~add~~ increase the amount of allowed usage of the program ~~in accordance with the license information acquired in the acquiring step~~, and if the ~~determining~~ determination step determines that the acquired license identification information corresponding to the acquired license information is included in the license identification information managed by the management unit, or if the recognition step recognizes that the acquired device identification information does not correspond to the device identification information of the image forming apparatus, not installing the acquired license information.

14. to 31. (Canceled)

32. (Currently amended) An image forming ~~management~~ apparatus ~~for managing license information indicating an amount of allowed usage of a program~~

~~executable on an image forming apparatus or a function of the image forming apparatus~~, comprising:

an image forming device that executes an image forming process;

a management device that manages (a) license information that has already been installed in the image forming apparatus, the license information indicating an amount of allowed usage of a program executable on the image forming apparatus or a function of the image forming apparatus, and (b) license identification information corresponding to the license information, wherein the management device manages the license information by using a counter;

an acquisition device that acquires, via a network, license identification information identifying license information, device identification information and license information indicating an amount of a change in a right of usage of the program;

~~a management device that manages license identification information corresponding to license information that has already been installed;~~

a determination device that determines whether the acquired license identification information corresponding to the acquired license information is included in the license identification information managed by the management device so as to avoid a duplicate installation of the license information; ~~and~~

a recognition device that recognizes whether the acquired device identification information corresponds to device identification information of the image forming apparatus; and

an installation device that, if the determination device determines that the acquired license identification information corresponding to the acquired license

information is not included in the license identification information managed by the management device and if the recognition device recognizes that the acquired device identification information corresponds to the device identification information of the image forming apparatus, installs the license information to ~~add~~ increase the amount of allowed usage of the program ~~in accordance with the license information acquired by the management device~~, and if the determination device determines that the acquired license identification information corresponding to the acquired license information is included in the license identification information managed by the management device, or if the recognition device recognizes that the acquired device identification information does not correspond to the device identification information of the image forming apparatus, does not install the acquired license information.

33. (Canceled)